

Funding for Assistive Technology in Missouri

The information provided in this section is designed to help persons with disabilities, families, advocates, and providers identify sources of funding for assistive technology. Programs change over time, so we welcome any new information for this funding guide. Anyone having questions about any listings, or wanting to share new or additional funding information, may contact Missouri Assistive Technology at (800) 647-8557.

State and Federal Programs Funding General Assistive Technology:

Medicaid provides coverage for durable medical equipment (DME). Medicaid eligibility is based on certain income guidelines and other factors such as disability. While coverage for DME for adults had been limited by the legislature for a time, a federal court decision in March 2007 restored previously covered DME. Some covered devices include: manual and power wheelchairs, scooters, walkers, augmentative communication devices, hospital beds, orthotics, prosthetics and eye glasses. Coverage for hearing aids for adults was not restored.

Missouri's children under 21 can receive a broader range of assistive technology devices through Medicaid than adults can receive. For example, while hearing aids are not currently covered for adults, they can be provided for children and adolescents aged birth to 21 years. In fact, any device that can be shown to be medically necessary can be provided to children and adolescents through Medicaid under federal law. For eligibility requirements, contact your county's Family Support Division (FSD) Office listed in your phone book. The FSD web site to get contact information for your county is: <http://www.dss.mo.gov/fsd/office/index.htm>

MC+ for Kids is Missouri's children's health insurance program. It can provide coverage for children ages birth through 19 in families who earn up to 300% of the federal poverty level. For example, for a family of three making less than \$4,293 per month, the child (or children) would be eligible for coverage. The program covers any service, equipment, or device covered by Medicaid except for non-emergency transportation. For more information, or to receive an application, call toll-free (888) 275-5908. The "MC+ for Kids" website is: <http://www.dss.mo.gov/mcplus/>

First Steps is Missouri's early intervention program for infants and toddlers with disabilities. The First Steps Program is mandated under the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), and is a system of early intervention services for all infants and young children, from birth to age 3 years who have special health care needs. An Individualized Family Support Plan (IFSP) is developed for each child and his/her family, and includes a description of what services needed by each child/family. Services provided may include assistive technology. Information about First Steps, including referring a child to First Steps, may be obtained by calling (866) 583-2392. You can find information about First Steps on the website of the Dept. of Elementary and Secondary Education at: <http://www.dese.mo.gov/divspeced/FirstSteps/index.html>

Local School Districts have certain obligations under IDEA to provide assistive technology for children with disabilities when needed to provide a free appropriate public education (FAPE). Each decision must be made on a case-by-case basis based on the educational needs of the student. If the student's Individual Education Program (IEP) team determines that he/she needs some type of assistive technology in order to receive FAPE, the child's IEP must contain a specific statement of such services. A school's or district's special education director is a point of contact to address the assistive technology needs of a student with a disability.

Medicare is a federally funded health insurance program which can help some persons with disabilities fund certain assistive technology devices and services. Persons must be age 65 and older OR must be eligible for monthly Social Security benefits due to disability. In order to be covered, assistive devices must meet Medicare's definition of "durable medical equipment" (DME). An individual must have Medicare Part B, the supplemental Medicare medical insurance which covers durable medical equipment. Under Part B, an individual must generally meet an annual deductible of \$100 and pay co-insurance of at least 20% of the Medicare approved amount for the device. Manual and motorized wheelchairs, walkers, hospital beds, seat lift mechanisms, oxygen equipment, artificial limbs, braces and ostomy supplies are some of the items covered. Coverage of augmentative communication devices began in January 2001. Devices and equipment that have NOT been commonly covered by Medicare include eyeglasses, hearing aids, assistive listening systems, telecommunication devices, environmental control devices, home modifications and vehicle modifications. For more information or to enroll in Medicare, contact your local Social Security Field Office listed in your phone book. The Social Security Administration has a web page where you can type your zip code for their nearest office. The web address is: <https://s044a90.ssa.gov/apps6z/FOLO/fo001.jsp>

Missouri Division of Vocational Rehabilitation can fund assistive technology devices and services when needed to assist persons with disabilities to gain or keep employment or to pursue college educations or other training programs toward employment. To be eligible for assistance through the Vocational Rehabilitation Program: 1) a person must have a physical or mental disability; 2) the disability must be a substantial impediment in getting or keeping a job; and 3) the person can benefit in terms of employment outcome from Vocational Rehabilitation services. There is no age limit for eligibility. Since gainful employment is the goal, most clients are between the ages of 16 and 65. Medical information must be obtained to document the disability. Financial status of the individual is considered and full or partial funding assistance for assistive technology may be provided on a sliding scale depending on income. Contact your district Vocational Rehabilitation office for more information. The web address for Vocational Rehabilitation is: www.vr.dese.mo.gov

Missouri Rehabilitation Services for the Blind can provide vocational services including assistive technology devices and services for persons with varying degrees of visual impairment similar to many of the services provided by the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation for persons with other types of disabilities. Persons may contact their district office of Rehabilitation Services for the Blind, or contact the State office at (573) 751-4249. The web address is: <http://www.dss.mo.gov/fsd/rsb/index.htm>

Resources For Persons With Developmental Disabilities:

Regional Centers for persons with developmental disabilities provide or help obtain needed services for Missourians with developmental disabilities. A Regional Center staff person will be assigned to work with individuals and their families. Eligible persons may gain access to a variety of services through the Regional Centers including therapies, family support, and residential services. Case coordinators may be able to assist individuals obtain assistive technology through a home and community based waiver or other resources. The Regional Centers operate under the Division of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities, Missouri Department of Mental Health. For more information about eligibility or available services, contact the nearest of Missouri's eleven Regional Center offices. A map showing the locations and coverage areas of the MRDD Regional Centers web page is at:

http://missouri.networkofcare.org/home_state2.cfm?productid=6&stateid=30

County Developmental Disability Boards can be a funding resource for assistive technology, depending on the county. Some provide only residential services and sheltered workshops, while others can help fund items such as assistive technology and housing access modifications. For more information, member county boards of the Missouri Association for County Developmental Disability Services are listed at: www.macdds.org.

Other Assistive Technology Resources:

Some national disability organizations have small grant programs or equipment loan programs for persons with disabilities. These kinds of programs vary depending on the local branch of the disability organization and may change frequently, depending on available funds. Organizations associated with particular disabilities should not be overlooked as possible funding resources. Missouri's Governor's Council on Disabilities publishes a Directory of Resources for Missourians with Disabilities that includes phone numbers and addresses of various disability organizations. The Governor Council's phone number is 800-877-8249. Their resource directory web page that allows searches by county is at:

<http://www.gcd.oa.mo.gov/directory/directory1.shtml>

Civic organizations in your county or city may also be a source of funding for assistive technology. Local groups, such as Lions Clubs, Jaycees, Kiwanis, etc., may have charitable giving priorities, but are worth contacting for possible assistance. Many area Chambers of Commerce maintain listings of civic organizations in the community.

Kids Assistive Technology (KAT) is a program that can provide some funding assistance for assistive technology, minor home access modifications, and vehicle access modifications needed for children under 21 years of age in families of low and moderate income. For an application or more information, contact Missouri Assistive Technology at (800) 647-8557, or you may send an e-mail to mexline@swbell.net

Missouri Cattlemen's Association Children's Fund is a statewide fund that can provide necessary medical equipment that is not covered by other funding sources such as wheelchairs, braces, prosthetic, walkers, or other rehabilitative equipment for disabled children up through 18 years of age. The fund will match dollar-for-dollar the recipients's contribution up to \$1,500 per request. For more information or an application, contact the Heartland Regional Community Foundation at (816) 271-7200 or by mail at 801 Faraon Street, St. Joseph, MO 64501

Sertoma is an international charity that focuses on helping people who have communication disorders. Sertoma has numerous clubs in Missouri. To find out if there is a local chapter in your area and to inquire about assistance from Sertoma, contact the International Sponsorships Director at (816) 333-8300 or e-mail infosertoma@sertoma.org

Variety Club is a charitable organization that can sometimes provide funding to children with disabilities for assistive devices. Both the Kansas City and St. Louis areas have a Variety Club affiliate. In the Kansas City area they can be reached at (816) 220-2068 or by letter at 17 Anchor Drive, Kansas City, MO 64015. The St. Louis Affiliate can be reached by telephone at (314) 453-0453 or by letter at 2200 Westport Plaza Drive, St. Louis 63146.

Midwest Special Needs Trust General Charitable Grants are available for a wide range of needs. Grants up to \$1,000 can be provided for durable medical equipment and other purposes and meet the Trust's low-income guidelines. Grant applications are reviewed quarterly. Contact phone: 888-671-1069.

Muscular Dystrophy Family Foundation. This national foundation can be a funding source for wheelchairs, van lifts, hospital beds, breathing machines, ramps, and other orthopedic equipment and appliances for persons with muscular dystrophy. For more information, contact: Muscular Dystrophy Family Foundation; 615 N. Alabama Street, Suite 330; Indianapolis, Indiana 46204. The phone number is (800) 544-1213.

"Show Me Loans" is Missouri's low-interest loan program for assistive technology devices, home access modifications and vehicle access modifications. For more information, see the Show-Me Loans page on this Missouri Assistive Technology website: <http://www.at.mo.gov/loans.shtm> or by phone, toll-free at (800) 647-8557. You may also send an e-mail to mexline@swbell.net.

Resources for Funding Computers:

Pan Educational Institute obtains donations of computers from corporate and other sources and refurbish them, if needed. The computers then can be provided to persons with disabilities. Available computer systems depend on what systems have been donated to the Institute. A letter of necessity written by a case manager, doctor or similar individual on their stationary is required. For more information, call the Pan Educational Institute at (816) 461-0201 or write to them at 10922 Winner Rd, Independence, MO, 64052.

Printers and fax modems may also be available for a reasonable charge. These are older printers. CD Rom drives are not available. The individual will need to know the specifications of the computer they need. For example, if it needs to run a certain type of software such as Naturally Speaking, the person will have to let Pan Educational know what specifications the computer needs in order to run the software. They may or may not have a computer available with these specifications.

Individuals may also inquire as to whether they are eligible for funding help through the Recycled Computer program of Missouri Assistive Technology (MoAT). See this MoAT website at: <http://www.at.mo.gov/SRP.shtm>

Funding for Adaptive Computer/ Adaptive Telephone Equipment:

Telecommunication Access Program (TAP)

TAP for Internet provides adaptive computer equipment and software at no cost to enable a person with a disability access the internet. Items needed by persons with any disability for access such as screen reading software, enlarging software, adapted keyboards, and voice recognition software are examples of the types of items available in the program. For an application or more information, call Missouri Assistive Technology (MoAT) at (800)-647-8557 or see this MoAT website at http://www.at.mo.gov/TAP_internet.shtm.

TAP for telephone provides adaptive phone equipment at no cost for persons with disabilities who have problems using traditional phone equipment. Examples of items available are TTYs, amplified phones, amplified ringers and visual ringers, hands free phones, amplified speech phones, phones with enlarged or braille numbers on the dial pad, and others. For an application or more information, call Missouri Assistive Technology at (800) 647-8557 (Voice) or (800) 647-8558 (TTY) or see this MoAT website at: http://www.at.mo.gov/TAP_telephone.shtm

Hearing Aid Resources:

Hearing Aid Loaner Bank is operated by the Missouri School for the Deaf. Hearing aids are donated, then set by an audiologist and distributed to children who have difficulty obtaining hearing aids. For more information, call (573) 592-2543.

Hear Now provides hearing aids and cochlear implants for individuals with limited financial resources. Hear Now coordinates a national hearing aid bank and accepts hearing aid donations from people all over the country. For more information call (800) 648-4327 or go to:

<http://www.sotheworldmayhear.org/hearnow/>

HIKE Fund. Hearing Impaired Kids Endowment is a national charity which can be a funding resource for hearing aids and assistive listening devices for children up to age 20. To receive an application, persons may call (402) 592-7987 or may write to: The HIKE Fund, c/o the International Center for Jobs Daughters, 233 W. 6th Street, Papillion, NE 68047 or go to:

www.thehikefund.org

Vision Resources:

Missouri Council for the Blind operates a matching grant program for the purchase of adapted technology (the Adaptive Technology Grant Program). This program is available to anyone who is legally blind and has exhausted all other sources of private and public funding for the desired device. For every dollar that the individual commits, the grant will match them up to \$3,000.

While the program will fund computer adaptations, it will **not** fund computers. An application form and other information can be obtained by calling the Council's main office at (800) 342-5632.

Home Access Modification Resources:

Kansas City Architectural Barrier Removal Program: Eligible persons must have an income below 80% of the median income level. Ramps, stair lifts, and bathroom modifications are among eligible access modifications. Contact: (816) 784-4021.

Kansas City's Metro Lutheran Ministries may be able to provide minor home repairs for seniors that can include minor access modifications. Contact: (816) 931-0027

Paraquad in St. Louis has a Home Accessibility Program (HAP) that can perform accessibility modifications to the homes of people with disabilities in the St. Louis area. Annual household income must not exceed 50% of the Area Median Income. For more information, call 314-289-

4200 (voice) or 314-289-4252 (TTY).

Community Action Agencies are regional agencies throughout Missouri that work in collaboration with other community agencies to provide services to low-income area residents. Some Community Action Agencies provide funding assistance for minor home access modifications. To see a list of agencies with contact information and the regions covered, you can call the Missouri Association of Community Action Agencies at 573-634-2969 or go to their website at: www.communityaction.org

Rural Development (U.S. Department of Agriculture) has a Home Repair Loans and Grants (Section 504) program that can be used for home access modifications as well as general home repairs. To be eligible for loans, the household must have income below 50% of the county median income and must have an acceptable credit history. To be eligible for a possible grant, the individual must be aged 62 or older and not able to afford a loan. The USDA Rural Development State office is in Columbia. The phone number is: 573-876-0976 (voice) or 573-876-9480 (TTY). The state USDA website has a listing of area and local offices in Missouri at: <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/mo/>

Show-Me Loans is Missouri Assistive Technology's (MoAT) low-interest loan program that can be used for home access modifications as well as vehicle access modifications and assistive technology. The interest rate for most borrowers is 2% to 4%. For more information, see this MoAT website at: www.at.mo.gov or call 800-647-8557.

Equipment/Device Loan, Exchange and Recycling Programs:

Equipment Technology Consortium (ETC) is a statewide assistive technology loan program where schools or agencies can check out equipment for a person with a disability for up to six weeks. The program can help a person try out equipment before buying, or for a device to serve as a replacement while their own equipment is in for repairs. Types of equipment available for loan include augmentative communication devices, many types of switches and mounts, environmental controls, hearing devices, home modifications, telecommunications, vision devices, and others. For more information, you may call ETC in Kansas City at (816) 501-4651 or at (877) 781-6275 x 4651.

Swap 'n' Shop is a consumer-to-consumer equipment exchange program coordinated by Missouri Assistive Technology (MoAT). This program is designed to match up those individuals who are looking for equipment with those who have it for sale or donation. Many agencies get a monthly listing. The current listings are available on this MoAT website under the Swap'n Shop heading. Persons interested in listing equipment may contact MoAT at (800) 647-8557.

Coalition for Independence AT Recycling (Kansas City) Program (DME) - Kansas City, provides statewide recycled manual and power wheelchairs, walkers, canes, crutches, commodes, shower chairs, positioning equipment and miscellaneous wheelchair parts. For more information, call 816-231-7166 x 217.

Southwest Center for Independent Living (Springfield) AT Recycling Program provides recycled manual and power wheelchairs, daily living devices and other durable medical equipment (DME). Serves Springfield and surrounding counties. Contact SW CIL at 417-886-1188.

LIFE Center for Independent Living (Farmington) AT Recycling Program provides recycled manual and power wheelchairs, daily living devices and other durable medical equipment (DME). Serves Madison, St. Francois and Ste. Genevieve Counties. Contact the LIFE Center at 800-596-7273.

SEMO Alliance for Disability Independence (Cape Girardeau) AT Recycling Program provides recycled manual and power wheelchairs, daily living devices and other durable medical equipment (DME). Serves Bollinger, Cape Girardeau, Perry, Mississippi and Scott Counties. Contact SEMO at 800-898-7234.